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The Gifts Of The Fool

Whyte Bard

The Men and the Women were hungry. All about them was the Mother's Bounty, the Gift of the Sacred King, and no way to harvest it.

The Fool came, and took of the Earth itself, and mixed it with water, and shaped a Pot. And He took of the Grass, and shaped a Basket, and Nets, and Clothing.

And He took wood from the Tree. A straight piece of wood, and he took a stone, the very Bones of the Mother, and shaped it to a point, and fastened it to the wood, and made a Spear.

With another stone He made a Hoe, and with another he crafted a Knife, and gave them to the Men and Women.

And the Fool spoke, and said, "Look you here at Tools. They give you claws and fangs, and extend your reach longer than any of the Brothers and Sisters-in-Fur, even as high as the stars themselves. They will bring you food, and clothing, and shelter. They are good servants, but poor masters, for they can also be used in the service of War, and War will harm and kill you, and destroy what you have. Learn from Earth, and be wise."

The Men and Women were cold, and the winds of Winter blew over them. Ice and snow rushed around them, and they huddled together, fearing.

But the Fool came to them, with a new thing.

He took wood from the Tree, and the Bones of the Mother, and made a small circle. And with the wood from the Tree He made Fire.

And the Men and Women gathered around the warmth, as planets gather around suns, and were glad.

And the Fool said, "Look you here at Fire. It is warm and good; a good servant, but a poor master indeed. Learn from this, that some things are good when used correctly, and very bad indeed when used wrongly. For Fire will warm your homes, and cook your food, and do many things for you, but it can harm you, and kill you, and destroy what you have. You will find many things like Fire. Learn from Fire, and be wise."

And the Fool took the clay pot, and filled it with Water, and placed therein the meat of the hunt, and the fruits of the Earth. He placed the pot upon the Fire, and the Water rolled and boiled, and the smell was savory to the Men and Women.

And the Fool spoke, and said, "Look you here at Water, the Blood of the Mother. It will refresh you, and cool you, and shall be your servant. But mind you do not let it be your master, for it will drown you, and flood you, and harm you and kill you, and destroy what you have. It is soft, but of all things it will wear through even the hardest object. You will find many things like Water. Learn from Water, and be wise."

The Fool sat beside the Fire, and hummed to Himself, and as He hummed He clapped his hands in time, and He made yet another new thing, and called it Song. And the Men and Women took up the Song, and sang, and rejoiced.

And the Fool said, "Look you here at Air. Song is of the Air, of the very Breath you take. Song will comfort you in sadness, and rejoice with you in celebration. Song will weave Words into Magic, and can bend the edges of Reality. Treat it with respect, and do not misuse it, for Song, and Words, can twist and lie and turn you to a harmful way; take away your individuality and turn you to a Mob, that knows not what it does."

"You swim in the Air as a Fish swims in Water. Keep it pure, and live. Foul it, and die. It is your choice. And beware of the Storms of the Air, for this insubstantial Element can destroy what you have, and kill you. You will find many things like Air. Learn from Air, and be wise."

And the Fool took of the Sacred King, and He winnowed it in the Air. He ground it between the Bones of the Earth, and He made flour, and wetted it with Water, and baked it in Fire, and made Bread, the Body of the Sacred King.

"Know that I am always with you," sang the Fool. "I am He who Saves, He who Teaches, He who brings Light to the World. I bring peace with one hand, and a sword with the other, that you may not stagnate, but might learn and grow, and attain the very stars in the Heavens."

"You will always kill me, in many ways. I have been chained to a rock, and crucified, and burned, persecuted, and hated. I have been banished and slain, but always, always I return to you, and I will not be silenced."

"My words will be twisted, and misunderstood, but with each generation you will strive ever closer to That which you reach for, forever striving, forever attaining, and forever changing."

"Sometimes I will come in quiet, slipping in and out again before you have known my Presence, and at other times I will come with the sound of trumpets and proclamations."

"But always I will come, and I shall be with you, always, to the End of Time."

And He gave the Bread to the Men and Women, and said "Remember!"

And one approached, and said, "You have told us of Earth, and my husband was digging therein, and it fell upon him and he died. Therefore I shall kill you."

And another approached, and said, "You have told us of Air, and a great wind has blown my mother from a high place, wherefrom she died. Therefore I shall kill you."

And another approached, and said, "You have given us Fire, and my daughter has burned her hand therein. Therefore I shall kill you."

And another approached, and said, "You have told us of Water, and my son has drowned therein. Therefore I shall kill you."

And they took the Spear, made from the wood of the Tree, pointed with the Bones of the Mother, and thrust it into the body of the Fool, and the Fool smiled sadly, and, for the first time of many, died.

"Will you always do this Teaching, O Fool?" said the Lady.

"Assuredly so," replied the Fool, with a smile, "For are they not Our children?"

"That they are," said the Lord, "But for how long shall You teach them, and be slain in return?"

"For always," said the Fool. And he smiled, and a single tear coursed down His cheek.

Thus it was, and so it is, and evermore shall be so!

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